I Claim:

1. An automated animal return system for an animal comprising:

an initiator for providing an initiating signal;

a command system for issuing a command to the animal in response to said initiating signal, said command designed to encourage the animal to go to a reward zone; and

a reward system for providing a reward to the animal in response to the initiating signal.

2. The animal return system of claim 1, wherein said initiating signal is provided on an occurrence of a predetermined event.

3. The animal return system of claim 1, wherein said predetermined event is selected from the group of events consisting of a predetermined time, a predetermined temperature and a predetermined weather condition.

4. The animal return system of claim 1, wherein said command is selected from a group of audible commands consisting of clicks, tones, whistles and verbal commands.

5. The animal return system of claim 1, including a locator system for determining a position of the animal relative to said reward zone, said initiator designed to provide said initiating signal when said locator system locates the animal within a first boundary zone located beyond said reward zone, and wherein said reward system is designed to provide said reward only when said locator system detects that the animal begins to return to said reward zone from said first boundary zone.

6. The animal return system of claim 5, wherein said locator system is selected from a group of locator systems consisting of GPS based locators, RF based

locators, ultrasonic based locators, magnetic direction sensor based locators, accelerometer based locators, manual gate systems, electronic gate systems and combinations thereof.

7. The animal return system of claim 1, wherein said reward is an audible reward selected from the group of audible rewards consisting of a click, a tone, a whistle and a verbal phrase.

8. The animal return system of claim 1, wherein said reward is food.

9. The animal return system of claim 1, wherein said reward is both an audible reward and food.

10. The animal return system of claim 7, wherein said reward is broadcast from a speaker located in or near said reward zone.

11. The animal return system of claim 7, wherein said reward is broadcast from a speaker mounted on a collar attached to the animal.

12. The animal return system of claim 7, wherein said reward is prerecorded.

13. The animal return system of claim 9, including a reward limiter to limit the provision of said food to selected times when the animal returns from said first boundary zone to said reward zone in response to said command.

14. The animal return system of claim 13, wherein said selected times are determined based on a fraction of a total number of times the animal has returned from said first boundary zone to said reward zone in response to said command.

15. The animal return system of claim 1, wherein said command is broadcast from a speaker located in or near said reward zone.

16. The animal return system of claim 1, wherein said command is broadcast from a speaker mounted on a collar attached to the animal.

17. The animal return system of claim 1, wherein said command is a prerecorded command.

18. The animal return system of claim 5, including a discomfort system for applying a discomfort to the animal on an occurrence of a predetermined event.

19. The animal return system of claim 18, wherein said predetermined event is selected from a group of events consisting of said locator system detecting that the animal has moved beyond said first boundary zone into a second boundary zone, and the animal not moving toward said reward zone after a predetermined amount of time following said issuance of said command.

20. The animal return system of claim 18, wherein said discomfort is selected from a group of discomforts consisting of an electric stimulus administered by electrodes attached to a collar secured to the animal, an audible tone broadcast from a speaker attached to said collar secured to the animal or from a central location, and an offensive spray issued from a spray system attached to said collar secured to the animal, or combinations of the above-listed discomforts.

21. The animal return system of claim 18, wherein the intensity of said discomfort is variable.

22. The animal return system of claim 18, wherein said discomfort is discontinued after a predetermined amount of time or following a predetermined number of applications.

23. The animal return system of claim 1, wherein said return system is operable in a training mode to enable a trainer to train the animal to respond to said command, said training mode including a manual command mode to enable said trainer to manually cause said initiating signal to be issued.

24. The animal return system of claim 23, wherein said training mode also includes a manual reward mode to enable said trainer to manually cause said reward to be provided to the animal.

25. The animal return system of claim 5, wherein the sizes of said first boundary zone and said reward zone are variable.

26. The animal return system of claim 1, wherein the return system is portable for operation at a remote location.

27. An automated animal return system for an animal comprising:

a locator system for determining the position of the animal relative to a reward zone;

a command system for issuing a command to the animal when said locator system detects that the animal is within a first boundary zone located beyond said reward zone to encourage the animal to return to said reward zone; and

a reward system for providing a reward to the animal when said locator system detects that the animal begins to return to said reward zone from said first boundary zone in response to said command.

28. The animal return system of claim 27, wherein said reward is an audible reward or a food reward or both.

29. The animal return system of claim 27, and wherein said reward system provides and audible reward to the animal when said locator system detects that the

animal begins to return to a neutral zone located between said reward zone and said first boundary zone in response to said command, and wherein said reward system provides a food reward to the animal when the locator system detects that the animal has returned to said reward zone in response to said command.

30. A method of causing an animal to return to a predetermined reward zone comprising the steps of:

automatically locating the position of the animal relative to the reward zone using a locating system;

issuing a command to the animal when said locating system detects that the animal is within a first boundary zone located beyond said reward zone to encourage the animal to return to the reward zone; and

providing a reward to the animal when said locating system determines that the animal begins to return to the reward zone in response to said command.